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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

April 10, 1969

National Security Study Memorandum 37

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Vietnam

As indicated in NSDM 9 of April 1, 1969, the President has directed the preparation of certain studies on Vietnam. He has asked that the following papers be prepared by the interdepartmental Ad Hoc Group on Vietnam and submitted to the NSC Review Group by the dates indicated.

Phased Withdrawals

a. Mutual Withdrawal

This paper should examine the modalities of mutual withdrawal, whether agreed to publicly or privately by both sides, tacit, or de facto. It should cover timetables, phasing, types of personnel, regroupment, local cease fires and any other relevant subjects. Military, logistic, territorial and political factors and implications should be considered. (May 16, 1969).

b. Vietnamizing the War

This paper should examine the modalities of US withdrawals under conditions of our progressively turning over combat efforts to the South Vietnamese in the absence of reciprocal enemy withdrawals. It should cover timetables, phasing, types of personnel, regroupment, and substitution of South Vietnamese forces. Military, logistic, territorial, and political factors and implications should be considered.

This study should reflect the findings of the preliminary report of the Secretary of Defense on a specific timetable for Vietnamizing the war. (June 13, 1969). (See NSSM 36)

Verification for Mutual Withdrawal

This paper should examine various means and mechanisms for verifying the process and completion of mutual withdrawals, whether agreed to publicly or privately by both sides, tacit, or de facto. It should set forth the advantages and disadvantages of various types of verification machinery including joint belligerent commissions, reactivation of the ICC, and creation of new international groups (such as an Asian body). The paper should include a discussion of our unilateral capability to verify withdrawals drawing on all sources of information. It should consider how agreed arrangements can usefully supplement our unilateral capabilities. (May 16, 1969).

Political Settlement for South Vietnam

This study should explore various types of political settlement within South Vietnam and the possible US role concerning these questions. The paper should examine all feasible options, including elections at all levels, sharing of governmental power before and/or after elections, constitutional considerations, agreed or de facto territorial accommodations, decentralization of government power. The study should discuss the feasibility of each alternative and the likely attitudes of the GVN, the various segments of the South Vietnamese populace, the NLF, and Hanoi. It should evaluate the likely evolution within South Vietnam under alternative arrangements. Finally, the possible US role -- in Vietnam as well as in the negotiations -- in achieving a political settlement should be covered. (May 16, 1969).

International Guarantees

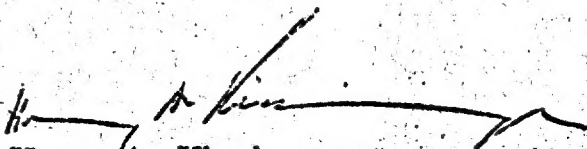
The paper should explore the subject of international guarantees for

- mutual withdrawal
- political settlement in South Vietnam
- the DMZ
- any other appropriate aspects of an overall Vietnam settlement.

In so doing, the study should be consistent with the separate papers on mutual withdrawal, verification for mutual withdrawal, political settlement for SVN, and our policy on the DMZ. This paper should

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discuss the advantages and disadvantages of attempting to achieve international guarantees, and ways to negotiate them -- e.g., at Paris, in a follow-on international conference, etc. (June 13, 1969).



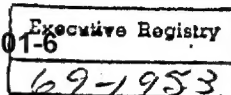
Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506



SAVA 1172
April 14, 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Office of the Vice President
Office of the Secretary of State
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Office of the Director of Emergency Preparedness

SUBJECT: Papers on Vietnam: Mutual Withdrawal and Negotiating Strategy

Enclosed are the final approved papers on Mutual Withdrawal and on Over-All Negotiating Strategy which reflect the decisions made by the President as set forth in NSDM 9.

Jeanne W. Davis
Secretariat

cc: Under Secretary of State
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence

Attachments

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SECRET ATTACHMENT

MEMORANDUM

April 11, 1969

TO: EA/VN - Mr. Matthews
L - Mr. Aldrich
INR/REA - Mr. Smyser
DOD/ISA - Col. Schandler
JCS - Capt. Scott
CIA - Mr. Carvery

FROM: S/P - Ralph N. Clough

SUBJECT: Meeting of Subcommittee on Inspection and
Verification Withdrawal of Forces

There will be a meeting of the Subcommittee on inspection and verification withdrawal of forces in the S/P Conference Room (State 7261) at 2:30 p.m., April 15, 1969, to discuss the attached draft outline.

Attachment:

Draft Outline

DRAFT OUTLINE

Inspection and Verification of Mutual Withdrawal of Forces

I. Introduction (State)

Purpose and scope of paper.

Verification of an agreed mutual withdrawal; of a reciprocal withdrawal without agreement.

International, bilateral, or unilateral verification?

Desirability that any international machinery for verifying withdrawal be used also to verify on a continuing basis other aspects of settlement, particularly cessation of infiltration.

II. U.S. Objectives (State)

III. GVN and NVN Positions (State)

IV. Major Options (State)

VI

A. UN-sponsored body.

B. New international commission, possibly all-Asian, reporting to continuing body established by Peace Conference.

C. Improved ICC.

D. Joint Commission

E. ^{Now} Territorial Scope of Inspection and Verification: the Problems of North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (State)

VI. Participants in Inspection and Verification Organization
(State)

- A. Composition of Organization.
- B. Asian Non-Communist Nations
- C. Other Non-Communist Nations
- D. Communist Nations

VII. Functions of International Inspection and Verification Organization (DOD-ISA)

- A. Verifying withdrawal of U.S. and NVN personnel.
- B. Investigating complaints that withdrawal not proceeding as agreed.
- C. Reporting regularly on withdrawal to control body (e.g., UN Security Council, Peace Conference participants, Co-Chairmen)
- D. Other possible functions (e.g., monitoring cease-fire, patrolling DMZ, investigating reports of re-infiltration, observing election, etc.)

VIII. Rights and Powers of International Inspection and Verification. (State)

(Most important desiderata for effective verification-- recognizing that not all will be fully attainable)

- A. Freedom of movement. *was/comb*
- B. Protection
- C. Adequate financial support.
- D. Maximum freedom from reliance on host government assistance.
- E. Decision by majority vote.
- F. Freedom of communication.
- G. Requirement to report to control body.

Re-infiltration
IX. Relationship of Verification to Guarantees or Sanctions.

(State)

X. Organization, Staffing, Deployment, and Logistic Support
for International Inspection and Verification Body. (DOD-JCS) *Refer*

XI. Negotiating Strategy (State)

S/P:RNClough:lm 4/11/69

US POSITION ON MUTUAL WITHDRAWALS

Introduction

For action purposes, we need a USG position on mutual withdrawals that would permit full exploration of the subject at an early date in Paris. Our first step must be to coordinate at least the opening elements of that position with the GVN.

The issue is inherently complex. It involves a number of key issues on which our opening position of principle seems to have little possibility of modification. But it also involves elements on which we would wish to take a strong opening position, but to leave the way open to possible modification as the negotiating situation and the situation on the ground evolve. Thirdly, there are a number of points--notably detailed arrangements on the ground in terms of regroupment areas and such -- that simply cannot be set forth in detail at this time, and that in any event would not be required until we had reached substantial agreement on principle in Paris.

Since the immediate need is for coordination with the GVN, this paper is in the form of an instruction to Ambassador Bunker.

The instruction treats the issue on its own bottom and without specific initial reference to past exchanges with the GVN. However,

we must recognize as a practical matter that the GVN and the troop-contributing allies continue to set great store by the language of the Manila Communique of October 1966, which was carefully negotiated and approved personally by Thieu and Ky for the GVN, and by the heads of state or government of Australia, Korea, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Thailand.

There is general agreement throughout the Government that we should not invoke the Manila Communique, by any specific reference, either in our public statements of position or in our dealings with the North Vietnamese. At the same time, there should be no public repudiation of that communique in view of its GVN and allied concurrence. What we should be aiming to do--as is stated clearly in the instruction to Ambassador Bunker below--is to work out a more detailed and full position on the whole subject, which in due course would be coordinated fully with the GVN and undergo the required consultation with the troop-contributing countries, and could then replace the Manila Communique as a point of reference.

An additional background fact is that discussions on this subject took place in late 1968 and early January 1969 between the US and GVN delegations in Paris (Paris 559). Certain key points were framed in the form of draft language setting forth the position of each

delegation. Obviously, these statements do not bind the present administration, or have anything like the same weight that the Manila Communique has to the GVN.

Finally, Paris 20873 contains the record of what was said to the North Vietnamese in Paris, in a private session on September 15, 1968. This reflects the full position conveyed by the last Administration on this private basis.

INSTRUCTION TO AMBASSADOR BUNKER

Introductory Points

A. In view of the urgent need to have a more detailed position on mutual withdrawal for use in Paris, you should now make this your highest priority for consultation with the GVN. This cable sets forth positions and supporting comment to serve as your guidance in these consultations. We leave it in your discretion whether you approach Thieu personally in the first instance. We wish to go forward as rapidly as possible, but of course recognize that his personal approval will be required for major elements, and particularly on issues where there have been past differences between our positions and those of the GVN.

B. You should make sure during your discussions with the GVN that they understand that the positions on mutual withdrawals which you

present are the best which we have been able to produce to date, and that as the negotiations proceed we will be continually consulting the GVN. Among relevant factors which may affect our position as negotiations proceed you should indicate: (1) the DRV reaction to our position as it unfolds; and (2) the success of the GVN effort to deal directly with the other side, in particular the NLF, on internal political matters.

C. You will note that the positions set forth below are stated without express reference to the Manila Communique. The relationship to that document is specified, wherever necessary, in the Supporting Comments for your oral use. We have of course likewise taken account of the preliminary exchanges in Paris summarized in Paris 559, and these too are noted in the Supporting Comments for oral use in your discretion. In general, you should make clear that we believe the negotiating requirement now goes beyond the rather general language of the Manila Communique, and that it therefore seems wise to work toward a new and more detailed formulation which would initially be clearly understood between the GVN and ourselves, and might thereafter be circulated for consultation with the troop-contributing countries (TCC). As your consultations proceed, we would of course be prepared to discuss with the GVN just what should be shared with the TCC and how--bearing in mind both the wisdom of such consultation and our

past undertakings.

D. We leave entirely in your discretion whether the positions stated below should be put in writing, wholly or in part. We would however wish to be kept advised what your plans are in this respect. On the one hand, your experience has often indicated that only a written document really brings the GVN into focus; on the other hand, we would wish to avoid any apparent commitment on points where there is inevitable play in the hand as the situation may unfold. We also have much in mind that a lengthy written document may cause major delay in what might in fact be adequately agreed for our initial purposes in Paris. With this last in mind in particular, we believe that separable discussion of key points will in any event be wise, and that any written papers should be on a separable basis.

E. In setting forth positions below, we have adopted an organization and number headings which we hope can be used with the GVN and among ourselves, from now on, to keep this issue as clearly focused and stated as possible. These number headings are as follows:

1. Basic Objectives.
2. Definition of North Vietnamese Forces and Elements Subject to Withdrawal.
3. Definition of US and Allied Forces and Elements Subject to

Withdrawal.

4. Conditions Precedent to Any Initiation of US and Allied Withdrawal.
5. Elements of an Agreed Withdrawal Timetable: Initiation, Phasing, and Completion.
6. Subsequent Conditions Affecting Phasing and Completion of Withdrawals.
7. The Relation Between Mutual Withdrawals and Progress Toward a Political Settlement.
8. The Related Issue of Withdrawal from Laos and Cambodia of North Vietnamese Forces and Elements Whether or Not They Were Ever in South Viet-Nam.
9. Inspection and Verification.
10. Possible Unilateral Force Reductions or Withdrawals, Including Our Response to Any Unilateral Withdrawals by the Other Side.

F. In the positions and supporting comment below, you will note that repeated reference is made to "the measures necessary to maintain the agreement." This language reflects our firm view that the ultimate settlement must include a complex of measures to insure that it will be preserved. In effect, we have in mind what we are calling, "guarantees" within the USG circle. However, we have deliberately used "measures necessary" -- rather than "guarantees" -- so as to avoid any present implication on the difficult question of any

future specific commitment by the USG to take action in the event of a breach of the settlement. As you are aware, the GVN sets great store by future "international guarantees" and may at some point seek specific commitments from us. It is important that we not give any verbal indication to them that would suggest present willingness to give such future commitments, and thus you should stick to the language that we have used throughout on this point. As you know, we have further work in process on the question of the totality of measures and actions that would in fact provide assurances that the settlement would be preserved.

Positions and Supporting Comment

1. Basic Objectives

a. Position. Our basic objectives in the area of mutual withdrawal are (a) to obtain the withdrawal of military forces and other elements introduced from North Viet-Nam into South Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia at any time; (b) to insure that such personnel return all the way to North Viet-Nam; (c) to get adequate assurance, through verification and supervision machinery, through the measures necessary to maintain the agreement, and through our own resources, that Hanoi complies with the conditions we have specified for agreed mutual withdrawals (see paragraphs 3 and 6 below).

b. Supporting Comment. With regard to enemy forces in South Viet-Nam this formulation is wholly consistent with the objective of the US and SVN, to end external aggression. The Manila Communique speaks of the withdrawal of "military and subversive forces to the North." We believe the proposed position is self-explanatory, and that the GVN would have no difficulty in accepting it. It is, of course, subject to other points set forth below, for example, our recognition that we may not in practice be able to identify all of the North Vietnamese or regroupees, that no verification and supervision system can be 100 percent effective, and that forces in Laos and Cambodia are not covered in the Manila Communique.

2. Definition of North Vietnamese Forces and Elements Subject to Withdrawal

a. Position. We will insist, in principle, upon the withdrawal to North Viet-Nam of North Vietnamese regular forces, North Vietnamese soldiers serving in nominally Viet Cong units, and all other

personnel infiltrated from North Viet-Nam into the South at any time, for the purpose of supporting the effort to seize control of South Viet-Nam.

While this would be the position we would take at all times in Paris, we must recognize among ourselves that our ability, with or without an effective supervisory organization, to identify all political and supporting elements introduced from the North is far from total. This is particularly true of native southerners. We should be prepared to live with some inevitable ambiguity on their remaining presence. This is not a point that should arise at an early stage, although it should be considered as we examine our own actions and inspection and supervisory machinery.

We recognize that the GVN might urge us to demand the removal of all military equipment and supplies introduced from the North. If they do so we should explain the problems this would create, particularly in terms of the probable demand from the other side that we withdraw our military equipment and supplies. We should inform the GVN that this problem needs further study among ourselves.

b. Supporting Comment. We believe that this definition of three categories conforms in essence to the Manila Communique. You will note that it does not repeat not agree with the position which the GVN

was asserting in January, that all personnel bearing arms against the GVN should be subject to withdrawal. Your reporting indicates that Thieu has backed off this position, although others such as Thanh may not have done so. In any event, we believe it is inconsistent with the whole thesis of aggression from the North--as opposed to a purely civil war--to take the negotiating position that southerners who never left the South are subject to withdrawal. Since the point is of major importance, and could lead to serious criticism here, we believe the GVN must accept the definitions stated above.

On the question of withdrawal of equipment and supplies you should explain frankly that we would not expect to take up this issue early in Paris. If we were to do so, we could well be confronted with immediate demands that all U.S. equipment and supplies should likewise be withdrawn. Since we both have in mind the necessity of leaving the GVN in an adequate military posture after the conclusion of hostilities, and that this may involve transfer of substantial equipment presently in U.S. hands to GVN forces, we would not wish to complicate matters in this area.

3. Definition of US and Allied Forces and Elements Subject to

Withdrawal

- a. Position. We should be prepared to withdraw all combat

9-A

forces from South Viet-Nam if Hanoi meets specific conditions of a mutual withdrawal agreement. These conditions should include provisions for:

1. Verification and supervision of withdrawal.
2. The withdrawal of North Vietnamese Forces from Laos and Cambodia, as well as from South Viet-Nam.
3. Measures necessary to maintain that agreement.

A difficult question concerns the definition of the term "military

forces." We believe that we should at the outset employ general language in such a way as not to foreclose in any way our insisting, at the appropriate time, that the settlement permit--or at least not exclude--the continued presence of US military personnel in certain key categories. These categories should include US military advisory and logistic personnel as may be worked out between the GVN and ourselves--recognizing that we must be prepared to accept that agreed and verified mutual withdrawals and the final settlement will in the end include the withdrawal of all US and allied combat forces and units if Hanoi complies with the agreed conditions.

b. Supporting Comment. As was suggested in the paper tabled in Paris (Paris 559), the question of what residual forces we would wish to leave must depend on joint GVN/US judgments which could be modified by the other side's compliance with any settlement, and the quality of verification, inspections, and "guarantees." At the same time, we must be clear that the situation we envisage is one in which-- if withdrawal and other elements of a settlement are in fact satisfactorily achieved--the responsibility for the internal security of South Vietnam will be solely in the hands of the GVN as a sovereign government. We, of course, understand the importance of preserving the right of

the GVN to request outside military and other assistance on a continuing basis, and this matter would be addressed under the appropriate headings related to other parts of the negotiation.

4. Conditions Precedent to Any Initiation of US and Allied Withdrawal

a. Position. We would begin phase-out of US and Allied forces as North Viet-Nam begins its withdrawals and the flow of new manpower has ceased.

With respect to the level of violence, removal of the North Vietnamese should lower the Viet Cong capability for violence. Thus, while we recognize that reduction in the level of violence is not a condition precedent to the initiation of withdrawals, failure to realize a reduction of violence after repeat after withdrawal had apparently been begun would be a strong indication that the North Vietnamese were not carrying through the withdrawal in good faith.

b. Supporting Comment. This formulation conforms to the interpretation we have consistently given to the Manila Communique, as was stated in Paris in January. The Manila Communique used the language: "As the violence thus repeat thus subsides." By this we have always meant--as Thieu and Ky are aware from the Manila backroom discussions of the language--the level of violence associated with the presence of external forces and elements. We have not

repeat not had in mind that we could expect to exact any condition with respect to whatever level of violence and terrorism might remain as the result of internal South Vietnamese action only. Such residual violence would in our view have to be dealt with by the South Vietnamese.

For purposes of discussion with the GVN, you should make this clear, while noting that the practical difference should not be significant particularly since we would--as already noted under point 3 above--require that Hanoi meet specific conditions of a mutual withdrawal agreement; including provisions for: (1) verification and supervision of withdrawal, (2) the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from Laos and Cambodia as well as from South Viet-Nam, and (3) measures necessary to maintain the agreement.

You will note that the cessation of infiltration is here applied solely to the flow of new manpower, and not of equipment and supplies.

You should be prepared to explain that we do not believe we could require a cessation of all movement of equipment and supplies at the outset, but may need to tolerate some such movement, on a subsistence basis, during the withdrawal process. However, we would expect that this movement from North to South would decrease as the withdrawal went on and cease altogether when the withdrawal was completed.

5. Elements of an Agreed Withdrawal Timetable: Initiation, Phasing, and Completion

a. Position. We would indicate in Paris that we were prepared to work out a withdrawal timetable that could include (a) phasing of agreed withdrawals on each side, (b) simultaneous initiation of the first increments of withdrawal, (c) and a completion schedule under which North Vietnamese forces and elements would be fully withdrawn before we were required to complete our withdrawals under the agreement.

There will be no public repudiation of the former U.S. position that we would complete our withdrawal within six months of the completion of Hanoi's withdrawal. This position will be adopted with the recognition that, in practice, the U.S. will be in a position to control the timing of the completion of our withdrawal, since we can determine if Hanoi has fully met the conditions of the mutual withdrawal agreement. The key point will not be the timetable but rather getting Hanoi to comply with the conditions for withdrawal.

b. Supporting Comment. Our specific willingness to accept simultaneous initiation is, we believe, wise in principle and also in accord with the principle of phasing that was inherent in the Manila Communique.

6. Subsequent Conditions Affecting Phasing and Completion of Withdrawals.

a. Position. We would make clear, at an appropriate stage in the negotiations, that we could not carry through our withdrawals, whatever the timetable, if the total pattern of North Vietnamese actions indicated that their withdrawal was not being carried through in good faith. Measures necessary to maintain the agreement would include not only the required assurance through verification that forces and elements were being and had been removed to the North, and that infiltration had ceased, but such elements as respect for the DMZ, absence of indiscriminate attacks on major cities, and absence of attacks on US and allied forces being withdrawn or being deployed for withdrawal. We would make clear that the DRV must recognize and accept these practical factors.

b. Supporting Comment. You should make clear that these points--which reflect our true reading of the significance of the "level of violence" reference in the Manila Communique--should not arise in

the early stages of discussion. We would need to stay in close touch with the GVN to see at what point they would be introduced, but we should be in no doubt among ourselves that we intend to insist on an over-all situation where Hanoi is not making up for the withdrawals by other actions that destroy the necessary atmosphere for carrying it through and for reaching a total settlement.

7. The Relations Between Mutual Withdrawals and Progress Toward A Political Settlement

a. Position. This issue has two aspects. On the first, the question of the future internal political structure of South Viet-Nam, we see no necessity to establish any connection with the issue of mutual withdrawals. We would thus expect to press the issue of mutual withdrawals without raising this question, which in any event falls within the primary concern of the GVN. As a practical matter, if we were in fact able to get agreed withdrawals on a satisfactory basis without any separate or related agreement on the internal political solution in the South, the situation would be advantageous to the GVN. In this sense, mutual withdrawals could proceed independently of any political settlement among authentic South Vietnamese.

On the other hand, we recognize the force of the point made by the GVN that the question of troop withdrawals is a major and

determining factor in the formulation of an over-all political settlement for Viet-Nam. We would not expect to carry withdrawals to completion if the total picture--including the degree of agreement reached in negotiations--gave us ground for serious doubt concerning Hanoi's intentions. We would thus expect to make a continuing judgment of the seriousness of Hanoi's intent to comply with the conditions for withdrawal specified above, and would take no position that foreclosed our right and ability to do so. Elements of judgment would include actions and agreements with respect to the DMZ, the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from South Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos, the adequacy of verification and supervision, and any other factors bearing on the issue.

b. Supporting Comment. This basic position conforms to the discussions of this issue in Paris. You should note to the GVN that this is not a point that should come up in the early stages, and that all that we are saying now is that we have it very much in mind and would wish to consult further with them on the subsequent negotiating positions and actions that would be required to carry it out. Our position boils down to reserving the right and capacity to use the withdrawal issue to the fullest possible extent, for its leverage on the Laos and Cambodia settlements and on an adequate inspection and verification machinery

related not merely to the carrying out of withdrawals but to continuing verification that there is not further infiltration.

In making the first point in the stated position, you should of course take pains to make clear that our desire to go ahead with mutual withdrawals, separately from the question of an internal political solution in the South, in no way diminishes the urgency we attach to early GVN/NLF contacts directed to a southern political solution.

8. The Related Issue of Withdrawal from Laos and Cambodia of North Vietnamese Forces and Elements Whether or Not They Were Ever in South Viet-Nam

a. Position. As already noted, we would insist that North Vietnamese forces and elements in South Viet-Nam be withdrawn all the way to North Viet-Nam. This would involve removal of such forces and elements from Laos and Cambodia.

As we take these positions in principle, we must bear in mind that--in terms of desired negotiating results--our first priority is the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces and elements from South Viet-Nam and Cambodia all the way to the North. Our second priority is the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces and elements, chiefly in the Laos panhandle, which operate in direct support of the aggression against South Viet-Nam. Our third priority, in terms of timing, is

the withdrawal of other North Vietnamese forces and elements --for example in the more remote areas of Laos. In the end, we aim to achieve all three objectives, but it may become desirable, in the negotiating process, to attack them separately and in their order of priorities. All three categories would, of course, be covered by the positions in principle that we would take from the outset.

b. Supporting Comment. The question of priorities is, again, one that may lie "down the line." The point of stating it now is that we should not get into the position with the GVN where each of the three priorities is absolutely dependent on the achievement, even in principle, of all three. Moreover, the practical fact is that some North Vietnamese elements in the northern provinces of Laos go back all the way to 1954 and will in practice be very hard to root out on any verified basis. While such elements in northern Laos would be a continuing security problem, they are not realistically part of the present or possible future major threat to South Viet-Nam.

9. Verification and Supervision

a. Position. As already noted, we would insist from the outset that agreed withdrawals must be subject to adequate verification and supervision.

In the opening stages of negotiation, we would expect to leave

open whether inspection and verification would be conducted in the first instance by our own GVN/US resources, by some form of joint commission, or by a new international group with a satisfactory composition and charter. These are complex issues and will require continuing consultation as the need for a firmer position arises. What is important is that we take the clear position in principle that there must be complete assurance that agreed withdrawals are being carried out in full compliance with the agreement.

In thus deferring detailed discussion, we would expect to make clear that our ultimate requirement extends not only to verification and supervision of the actual withdrawal process, but to assurance that there would not in the future be infiltration or any threat from North Viet-Nam against South Viet-Nam, Laos, or Cambodia. This gets to detailed and complex questions concerning the nature of future verification and supervision machinery, and also relates to the measures necessary to maintain the agreement. What is important is that we take the clear position that there must in the end be complete confidence that agreed withdrawals are carried out in full compliance with the agreement.

b. Supporting Comment. Essentially, this position means that we might be prepared to commence withdrawals before any new

verification and supervision machinery was in place. We believe that our own GVN/US intelligence and military resources could, under present circumstances, give us sufficient confidence for this purpose. However, as noted above, we would not carry through or complete any withdrawal process in the absence of a fully functioning and satisfactory verification and supervision machinery and measures necessary to maintain the withdrawal agreement.

10. Possible Unilateral Force Reductions or Withdrawals, Including Our Response to Any Unilateral Withdrawals by the Other Side

a. Position. This is a question of our own actions, rather than any initial statements of position in Paris.

As we have already agreed, US and allied force reductions may be carried out at any time, on the basis of full consultation with the GVN and an over-all judgment of the situation, including the effect on our negotiating posture.

In addition, if there should be unilateral North Vietnamese withdrawals to North Viet-Nam, we would consider--in further consultation with the GVN--efforts to obtain an express acknowledgement and confirmation of such withdrawals, and would then consider the possibility of reciprocal US and allied withdrawals in advance of any agreement on the subject. Any such decisions and consultations would

of course take into account the military and over-all situation existing at the time.

b. Supporting Comment. In the event of tacit North Vietnamese withdrawals, we might in fact carry out unilateral withdrawals but would withhold explicit reciprocity until there was at least agreement to the principle of mutual actions. We see no significant difference with the GVN, which has simply noted--in the Paris exchanges--that there should be clear indication and understanding given by both sides--with which we agree.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

April 10, 1969

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

DDI-100-69

National Security Study Memorandum 37

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Vietnam

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b. Vietnamizing the War

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This study should reflect the findings of the preliminary report of the Secretary of Defense on a specific timetable for Vietnamizing the war. (June 13, 1969). (See NSSM 36)

Verification for Mutual Withdrawal

This paper should examine various means and mechanisms for verifying the process and completion of mutual withdrawals, whether agreed to publicly or privately by both sides, tacit, or de facto. It should set forth the advantages and disadvantages of various types of verification machinery including joint belligerent commissions, reactivation of the ICC, and creation of new international groups (such as an Asian body). The paper should include a discussion of our unilateral capability to verify withdrawals drawing on all sources of information. It should consider how agreed arrangements can usefully supplement our unilateral capabilities. (May 16, 1969).

Political Settlement for South Vietnam

This study should explore various types of political settlement within South Vietnam and the possible US role concerning these questions. The paper should examine all feasible options, including elections at all levels, sharing of governmental power before and/or after elections, constitutional considerations, agreed or de facto territorial accommodations, decentralization of government power. The study should discuss the feasibility of each alternative and the likely attitudes of the GVN, the various segments of the South Vietnamese populace, the NLF, and Hanoi. It should evaluate the likely evolution within South Vietnam under alternative arrangements. Finally, the possible US role -- in Vietnam as well as in the negotiations -- in achieving a political settlement should be covered. (May 16, 1969).

International Guarantees

The paper should explore the subject of international guarantees for

- mutual withdrawal
- political settlement in South Vietnam
- the DMZ
- any other appropriate aspects of an overall Vietnam settlement.

In so doing, the study should be consistent with the separate papers on mutual withdrawal, verification for mutual withdrawal, political settlement for SVN, and our policy on the DMZ. This paper should

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discuss the advantages and disadvantages of attempting to achieve international guarantees, and ways to negotiate them -- e.g., at Paris, in a follow-on international conference, etc. (June 13, 1969).


Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

April 10, 1969

DDI-999-69

National Security Study Memorandum 36

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Vietnamizing the War

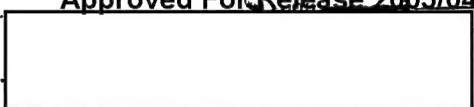
The President has directed the preparation of a specific timetable for Vietnamizing the war. He has asked that the Secretary of Defense be responsible for the overall planning and implementation of this process, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence.

The plan should cover all aspects of US military, para-military, and civilian involvement in Vietnam, including combat and combat support forces, advisory personnel, and all forms of equipment. The plan can draw on current studies, including those for T-Day planning and RVNAF modernization and improvement. However, this timetable will be directed toward the progressive transfer to the South Vietnamese of the fighting effort with the US and other TCCs increasingly in support roles, assuming that the war continues and that North Vietnamese as well as Vietcong forces are in South Vietnam.

Assumptions for this timetable will include:

- a starting date of July 1, 1969;
- current North Vietnamese and Vietcong force levels, (i. e., we are not able to achieve mutual withdrawals); these levels should be continually adjusted in future months to ongoing intelligence estimates;
- current projections of RVNAF force levels;

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- no deescalation in allied military efforts, except that resulting from phased withdrawals of US and other TCC forces which are not fully compensated for by the South Vietnamese;
- the highest national priorities for the equipping and training of South Vietnamese forces.

Based on these assumptions, timetables should be drawn up for the transfer of the combat role to the GVN and restriction of the US role to combat support and advisory missions only, with alternative completion dates of December 31, 1970, June 30, 1971, December 31, 1971, and December 31, 1972. For each alternative schedule the plan should identify the degradation in combat capability, if any, which would result, and the implications for the per cent of population under relatively secure GVN control. Each schedule should also estimate the budget and BOP implications.

Continual study, refinement and reevaluation of these problems will be necessary as the Vietnamization process proceeds. The President has requested by June 1 an initial overall report outline, as well as specific recommendations, with alternatives, for the first six months (July 1 to December 31, 1969), and a complete report by September 1. Further studies, recommendations, and progress reports will be requested subsequently.


Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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